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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
Response to U.S. bombings

VOL. 62/SUPPLEMENT TO NO. 31 SEPTEMBER 7, 1998

U.S. hands off Sudan and Afghanistan!

Join the Young Socialists!

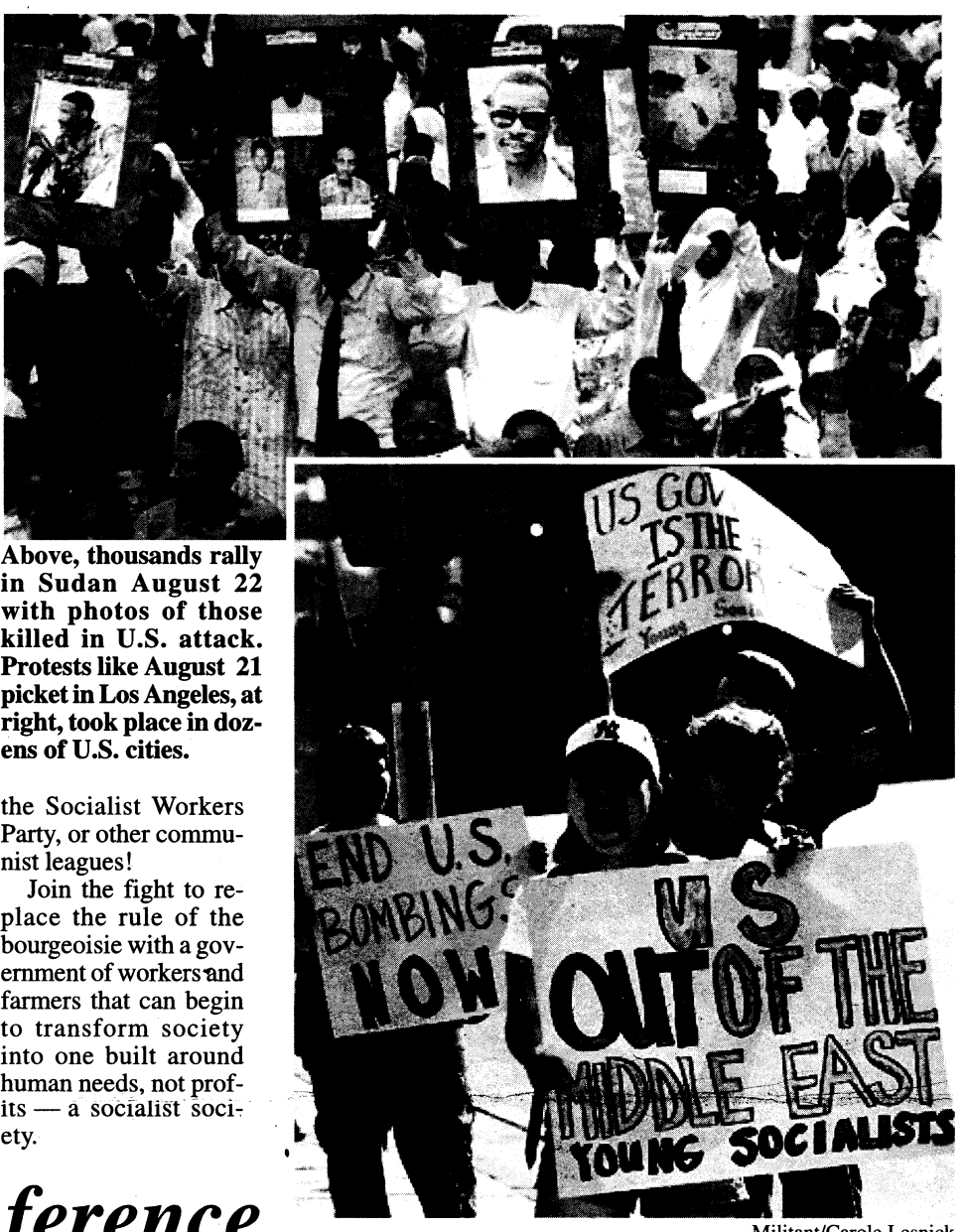
Tell the truth about the U.S. aggression against the peoples of Sudan and Afghanistan. Expose Washington's lies and protest any new attempts to assault the dignity and sovereignty of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. That should be the watchword for working people and youth in the United States and around the world.

Since his election in 1992, William Clinton has been steered by the need of the U.S. rulers to bolster their position as the world's dominant power, in order to deal harder blows to the expectations and living conditions of working people the world over. The assault on Sudan and Afghanistan has this aim, in a region of the world where Washington is vying with its imperialist rivals, particularly Paris, for dominance and is facing the prospect of an eventual confrontation with the workers state in Russia. The imperial aggression by the U.S. ruling class abroad goes hand-in-hand with the bosses' offensive against workers' pay and living and working conditions at home.

The brutal and cowardly bombings ordered by the Clinton administration — with broad bipartisan backing in Congress — have nothing to do with "Wag the Dog." Clinton's libido, lechery, and all-around offensive behavior notwithstanding, all Democratic and Republican politicians without exception are driven by the inherent, blind laws of a capitalist system mired in depression. They are trying to beat back the U.S. rulers' imperialist competitors to shore up the declining profit rates of the bankers, industrialists, and landlords they represent. But Washington is lashing out against the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa from a position of weakness, not strength — as the world's last empire in its decline. The reaction to the bombings by millions the world over shows that imperial brutality sparks resistance. Before the employing classes can lead humanity to fascism and another world war, working people will get their chance to take power out of the warmakers' hands once and for all.

The article below points the way forward for workers and young people who want to put an end to a system where working people are killed, medicine factories destroyed, and the rights of entire peoples trampled upon for the sake of the profits of a few already wealthy families. Join the Young Socialists, the Socialist Workers Party, or other communist leagues!

Join the fight to replace the rule of the bourgeoisie with a government of workers and farmers that can begin to transform society into one built around human needs, not profits — a socialist society.



Above, thousands rally in Sudan August 22 with photos of those killed in U.S. attack. Protests like August 21 picket in Los Angeles, at right, took place in dozens of U.S. cities.

Militant/Carole Lesnick

EDITORIAL

YS organizes West Coast conference

BY JACOB PERASSO

SAN FRANCISCO — Young Socialists members in California are responding to the growing number of youth attracted to the Young Socialists in the region, and are organizing a West Coast regional conference for September 5–6 in San Francisco. The Seattle YS chapter will also participate in the event.

Young Socialists members on the West Coast are building on their recent recruitment gains. Samantha Kern, California organizer of the Young Socialists, explained that the "San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle YS chapters want to build the kind of conference that leaves all the chapters on the same footing and strong enough to reach out to many different lines of resistance among working people and those fighting national oppression." Bringing young people to the conference will be the main priority of YS members in the region over the next ten days, Kern said.

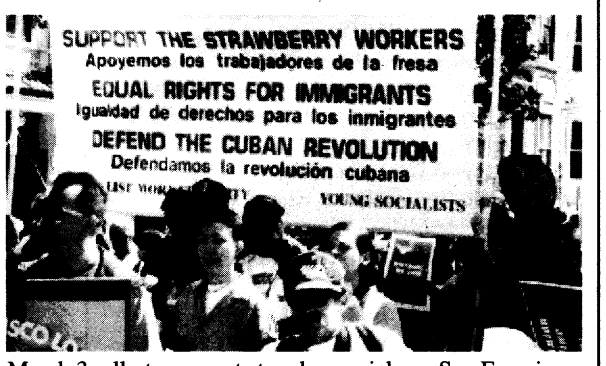
"Mass work has been at the center of activity of the YS chapters here in California," she noted. California Young Socialists members helped build a march of around 400 for Puerto Rican independence on July 25 in San Francisco. Bay Area YS members were also active in building a demonstration of 250 in defense of bilingual education June 1 at the University of California in Santa Cruz. Kern said that YS members in California are looking forward to building an upcoming tour of Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda and the planned visit to the Bay Area by Cuban poet Norberto Codina. Young Socialists in San Francisco also participated in two demonstrations August 21 protesting the U.S. missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan.

Carlos Hernández, organizer of the Los Angeles chapter, reports that the Young Socialists have made some recruitment gains there in the past few months. "The YS in Los Angeles has been involved in various struggles, including the fight against [anti-bilingual education] Proposition 227 and the fight to defend affirmative action." That chapter also helped organize a protest against the U.S. bombings. Three members there have joined the organization in the last two months. "This conference is important because it will focus on building chapters of the YS that can take advantage of the opportunities that exist. Many of the youth radicalizing today are attracted to the Young Socialists," said Hernández.

Young Socialists Regional Conference ❖ San Francisco

September 5–6

- **Reaching out to opportunities in mass work**
  From the struggles of farm workers in the fields to the fight for affirmative action and bilingual education
- **Winning young fighters to the revolutionary movement**
- **Mining our communist continuity**



March 3 rally to support strawberry pickers, San Francisco.

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Washington's excuses for bombings wear thin

BY NAOMI CRAINE

From Pakistan to the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip to the Sudanese capital Khartoum, workers and other toilers who are mostly Muslim have responded with outrage to Washington's bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan.

On August 20, U.S. warships deployed in the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea fired a total of 79 cruise missiles on the two nations, hitting the Al Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum and several sites in Afghanistan.

The Clinton administration claims these bombings were carried out as an act of "self-defense" against an "international terrorist network" allegedly organized by Saudi Arabian businessman Osama bin Laden. But as more of the facts come out, Washington's justifications for its imperial aggression are wearing thin.

U.S. president William Clinton personally ordered the missile assault, which killed several people in Sudan and an estimated 50 people in Afghanistan. According to press reports, U.S. Navy ships fired some 25 Tomahawk missiles carrying high-explo-

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Clinton: point man for use of U.S. military might since his election in 1992

Below are excerpts from a talk Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes presented on Nov. 7, 1992, at a Militant Labor Forum in New York City. That was four days after the presidential ballot when William Clinton was first elected U.S. president. The public meeting coincided with a weekend conference of the SWP National Committee, leaderships from communist leagues in other countries, and youth leaders actively involved in supporting the Socialist Workers Party's 1992 presidential ticket. The meeting was attended by some 400 people from throughout the Northeast.

We are publishing these excerpts because they shed light on the current discussion about what's behind the U.S. bombings of Sudan and Afghanistan. The talk, titled "The Vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan's 'Culture War': What the 1992 Elections Revealed," will be published in its entirety in a forthcoming Pathfinder book whose working title is *Capitalism's Growing World Disorder: Working-Class Politics in the 21st Century.* It is copyright © 1998 Pathfinder Press and is reprinted by permission. Subheadings have been added by the *Militant.*

BY JACK BARNES

The one thing all the commentators seem to agree on is that the central issue in the election this year was the economy. "It's the economy, stupid!" — that is the cynical sign the president-elect's top election strategist is said to have mounted on the wall of Clinton's campaign operations center in Little Rock, Arkansas. And the president-elect himself says that during his first one hundred days he will concentrate "like a laser" on the economy. That laser, he promises, will get the economy moving, change the atmosphere for enterprise, and accelerate production.

Militant/Arthur Hughes

None of this is true. The election was *not* about the economy. Like all U.S. presidential elections in the late twentieth century, this one was decided on the basis of foreign policy. No one who voted could have had any idea how George Bush and William Clinton differed on "the economy." Thinking workers knew that whichever of the two main contenders won would make little difference. The capitalist class knows that no administration, Republican or Democrat, determines what the economy is going to do: the very syntax itself is nonsense. The real relationship is vice versa: the economy — or more precisely, the propertied holders of massive debt standing behind the economy — largely determines what the administration is going to do.

To the degree that domestic policy was central to the election, the real issues — that is, those that will come to dominate bourgeois and radical right-wing politics — were raised by Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan. Perot said it was time to face the truth about the growing lack of confidence in the leading personnel of both the Democratic and Republican parties and their bipartisan policies. And Buchanan launched what he called a "culture war," a "religious war," a "battle for the soul of America." That battle *was* joined in the last six months, and it will continue and eventually dominate politics in the Congress, at the ballot box, and in the streets.

Of course, in times of capitalist crisis, economic questions increasingly are foreign policy questions. Trade wars lead to shooting wars; collecting interest on onerous debt leads to shooting wars. That is the history of world capitalism. Lurking beneath the surface of a lot of what we hear from bourgeois opinion-makers today is the consoling notion: "We won't let that happen this time, like we did in 1914 and again in the late 1930s. We'll settle things before it goes that far." But it will all happen again, so long as the capitalist classes remain in power. They can settle this or that particular crisis, but it will happen again.

'October surprise' failed

George Bush did not lose the election. He was *defeated.* He was not defeated by the working class. The class struggle has not reached the stage in the United States where the working class has a way to express itself politically; the interests of working people are not being registered even indirectly in elections. Nor was Bush defeated by the governor of Arkansas.

If any individual should get the credit for defeating George Bush, it is someone from Bush's own class (he would hate to admit that social fact) in another country —Saddam Hussein. That is who defeated George Bush in this election. That reality was announced by Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a month before the election took place. I assume that up until roughly the Republican convention in August, many of you, like me, thought George Bush could win the election if he could pull off what the press started calling an "October surprise." If a sitting U.S. president, offering some pretext, starts a military action close enough to the November elections, he will win. That statement is not an attack on democracy; it is just a recognition of *what imperialist democracy is,* in the absence of an independent working-class voice of any weight.

There is good reason to believe that is exactly what George Bush was planning to do. But then something happened the day before the Republican convention opened in August. There was a "leak" in Washington explaining what Bush was up to. The plan had been to take out some industrial enterprises in Iraq, which Bush would claim were being used for research on nuclear weapons production. The story was splashed on the front page of every leading newspaper everywhere in the country. That, of course, took the "surprise" out of the October surprise, and scuttled the operation itself. What is important is that the "leak" came right from the top at the Pentagon itself.

Then, a month later, General Powell invited the *New York Times* to interview him. He told the *Times* that whenever he hears politicians talk about a "surgical" strike somewhere, "I head for the bunker. As soon as they tell me it is limited [force]," he said, "it means they do not care whether you achieve a result or not." Powell said he opposed talk about "limited military intervention" in Bosnia, for example. If a U.S. administration decided to go in someplace, he told the *Times*, then it had better be planning to win.

Above, destruction after 1991 U.S.-led assault near Baghdad, Iraq. Left, Young Koreans United contingent at Oct. 20, 1990, protest in New York against the Iraq war.

Bravely, two days later the former senator from Tennessee — Albert Gore — gave a campaign speech about how George Bush had coddled Saddam Hussein in the late 1980s and how this had led directly to the invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War. This was followed by a feature article in the *Wall Street Journal* headlined: "Cold War's End Shuffles Foreign-Policy Debate: Bush Urges Caution and Clinton Takes Hard Line." The article opened: "Which candidate a) criticizes his opponent for being too cozy with Communist leaders; b) has argued for using military power in the world's hottest military conflict [Yugoslavia]; c) was the first to endorse legislation expanding the embargo on Fidel Castro's Cuba? Democrat Bill Clinton has taken those stands...." And the article could have added Clinton's more tough-talking rhetoric and military aid in support of Israel, as well as a raft of other examples.

General Powell was not speaking just for himself in that interview with the *New York Times*, nor was he speaking for the military brass. We hear a lot in the big-business media about the officer corps having its own independent views, and its own debates, on U.S. military policy. That is a myth; the opinions of top officers like Powell reflect substantial currents in ruling-class circles. The truth about the election results must start with the fact that the U.S. rulers broke their teeth on the Iraq war last year. All the long-term goals they had been fighting to achieve in the Gulf for ten years — all the things tied up there with the Iran-contra deal and the so-called Iraqgate scandal — were denied them....[1]

The grand coalition that Washington put together in the Gulf came apart at the end. The pro-NATO, pro-Washington, pro-privatization government in Turkey was the first victim. The rebellion by the oppressed Kurdish people in southeastern Turkey gained strength, and Istanbul has not been able to get them back under control. The tensions grew, and divergences between Tel Aviv and Washington widened. The German and Japanese ruling classes took advantage of the war and its outcome to each take one more step toward strategic rearmament, a rearmament that will ultimately be used to threaten Washington and other momentary allies in the contest over world economic and currency dominance. The Gulf War was a genuine defeat for Washington on all these fronts.

With Bush soon to be out of office, the

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[1]The U.S.-organized war against Iraq was an extension of Washington's efforts to restore U.S. imperialist dominance in the Gulf region that had been lost with the victory of the Iranian revolution in 1979. Behind a cover of official neutrality, Washington backed Baghdad's 1980–88 war against Iran, hoping that a defeat for Tehran would open the way to reimposition of a more subservient regime. During the 1992 elections, Democrats played up revelations that the Reagan and Bush administrations had provided loan guarantees used by the Iraqi government in the 1980s to build up its stocks of weapons; the scandal became known as "Iraqgate" in the daily press.

In 1986 the Reagan administration had also secretly sold arms to Iran. In doing so, Washington sought to curry favor with forces in Tehran it hoped would be more pliant to U.S. demands, while at the same time securing funds to finance covert aid for armed counterrevolutionary bands in Nicaragua, the "contras." The exposure of this operation in November 1986 became know as the "Iran-contra," or "Contragate," affair.

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U.S. bombings spark outrage

Continued from front page

sive munitions at the factory in an industrial area of the Sudanese capital at 7:30 p.m. local time, while some workers were still inside. Simultaneously, about 50 more missiles loaded with both explosives and anti-personnel cluster bombs crashed into a region of Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan, where it was about 10:00 p.m. and residents were in their sleeping quarters.

In announcing the bombings, Gen. Henry Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated the timing was "part of our overall effort to minimize collateral damage" — the Pentagon's euphemism for killing civilians.

Bin Laden is dubbed 'top terrorist'

U.S. officials assert that the six sites hit in Afghanistan were military training camps run by bin Laden; some residents of the camps who survived the attack said they were there for Islamic studies. Bin Laden, who collaborated with Washington to organize right-wing militias to fight the Soviet-backed regime in Afghanistan in the 1980s, has reportedly been an opponent of Washington, especially the U.S. military presence in predominantly Muslim countries, since the 1991 U.S.-led war against Iraq. Following the August 7 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, U.S. officials began to point the finger at bin Laden and describe him as the world's "top terrorist."

A man few people in the United States had ever heard of was suddenly declared responsible for an attempted bombing of U.S. troops in Yemen in 1992; the killings of U.S. soldiers during their occupation of Somalia in 1993; the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York the same year; plots to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak and the Pope; explosions at U.S. military installations in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996; and a host of other actions. Ratcheting up the efforts by the U.S. big-business media to paint this picture, the *Wall Street Journal* reported August 24 that weeks earlier bin Laden had been "charged in a sealed indictment with supporting terrorist activities against U.S. citizens in Somalia and Yemen." This can serve as a possible pretext for Washington to try to kidnap bin Laden and organize a show trial.

On August 27, wire services reported that a Yemeni man arrested in Kenya along with two others for alleged involvement in the bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi was being flown to New York that day. Kenyan authorities did not comment on whether charges have been filed against the man. "U.S. law permits a trial in the United States for those charged in terror attacks against American citizens, even when those attacks are carried out on foreign soil," a CompuServe News Room report said.

In Sudan, the bombing target was the Al Shifa pharmaceutical plant, which Gen. Shelton claimed was part of the "bin Laden network" and "involved in the production of chemical weapons agents." In the days following the bombings, it came out that Washington's "evidence" consisted of a soil sample allegedly taken by U.S. agents outside the plant months before the bombing. The soil supposedly contains a chemical that U.S. officials say is used only in the production of VX nerve gas.

According to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, scientific papers show that the chemical, Empta, could also be used in producing fungicides and antimicrobial agents. Other chemical experts noted that the structure of Empta resembles that of an agricultural insecticide used in Africa, and that it might also be a byproduct of the breakdown of other pesticides.

Sudanese officials say the Al Shifa plant was used solely for the production of human and veterinary medicine. They have invited journalists and United Nations inspectors to examine the wreckage. Washington, which nearly launched a military assault on Iraq earlier this year over the demand that Baghdad allow UN inspections, worked to scuttle a resolution proposed by the Kuwaiti government in the UN Security Council to examine the Sudanese factory.

The bombing will affect medical supplies in Sudan, a nation of 30 million people. Gazi Suliman, a lawyer for the factory's owner, stated that it supplied more than 50 percent of the domestic market for medicines.

Washington has tried to establish an "Iraq connection" as part of its campaign to justify destroying the pharmaceutical plant. Among the "proofs" offered are that some Iraqi scientists allegedly attended the grand opening of the factory two years ago, and an Iraqi government purchase order for one of the factory's veterinary medicines for deworming farm animals.

Attempt to cook up 'Iraq connection'

An article in the August 26 *New York Times* by Jane Perlez was a typical media attempt to bolster this claim. Under the headline "Iraqi Deal With Sudan on Nerve Gas Reported," Perlez cited unnamed "foreign diplomats and Sudanese" as sources alleging that "in return for Iraqi financial help and assistance by military and civilian experts, the Sudan agreed to allow its installations to be used by technicians for steps in the production of chemical weapons."

Despite this dramatic lead, Perlez did not provide much evidence. "The diplomats and former government officials said it was not absolutely clear at which of several plants the Iraqis were working on chemical weapons," or what chemicals were supposedly being produced, she said. Perlez also acknowledged, at the end of the article, that the "connection between the pharmaceutical plant and Osama bin Laden...was not clear." The factory is currently owned by Sudanese businessman Salah Idrisse.

The August 20 U.S. bombings coincided with stepped up propaganda by Washington directly against Baghdad. The very same day, the UN Security Council voted to renew the trade embargo against Iraq that has been in effect since 1990, using the pretext of Baghdad's rejection of limitless "weapons inspections." The U.S. government failed in its efforts to include a clause threatening the "severest consequences" if Baghdad does not bow to U.S. commands. But U.S. ambassador to the United Nations William Richardson threatened to keep up the sanctions "in perpetuity."

Washington keeps a massive military presence in the region to put muscle behind the embargo, which has led to the deaths of more than 1 million Iraqis. This force currently includes 23,000 soldiers, 170 aircraft, and 24 warships patrolling the Arab-Persian Gulf. The August 27 *New York Times* reported in a front-page article that within the last week Washington and its allies "have quietly moved ships into waters near Iraq" to tighten the noose and make sure no oil shipments from Iraq escape the U.S.-organized virtual naval blockade.

The governments of Sudan and Iraq are among seven that Washington accuses of "state terrorism" because they have refused to accept U.S. dictates. The list includes Cuba, Iran, Libya, north Korea, and Syria. Washington maintains military pressure, direct or indirect, against all of these countries, including backing some of the anti-government forces in the civil war in Sudan.

Alongside the bombings the U.S. rulers are taking other steps to portray Arab and Muslim peoples as criminal, such as trumpeting the alleged arrest of Abu Nidal, head of the Palestinian group Fatah Revolutionary Council, in Egypt, which the Egyptian government denies. Washington is increasingly belligerent in its campaign against the Libyan government, demanding the handover of two Libyan nationals U.S. officials accuse of bombing a U.S. plane over Scotland. If the Libyan government does not agree for the men to be tried in the Netherlands, the Clinton administration threatens to tighten an embargo against that nation that has been in place since 1992. And U.S. troops have been working with the secret police in Albania to round up "terrorists" who Washington claims were plotting against U.S. government targets there.

Times: U.S. gov't 'has right to attack'

In editorial pages across the United States and the United Kingdom, the big-business press immediately backed the Clinton administration's decision to bomb. "The United States has every right to attack suspected terrorists if there is credible evidence showing that they were involved in attacks against American citizens or were planning such attacks," read the opening sentence of the *New York Times* editorial the morning after the missile assault.

Some commentaries had a blatantly racist tone. The August 21 *Financial Times* of London essentially dismissed the question of the sovereignty of Afghanistan and Sudan, referring to these countries as " 'non-states' — countries where central authority is either weak or nonexistence." The headline on another article in the same issue of that paper refers to Sudan as a "vipers nest."

Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment echoed this. He applauded the bombing, but urged Clinton to take on "more serious foreign-policy challenges than bombing two primitive non-states like Afghanistan and Sudan."

Affront to Muslims

But toilers and other social layers in Sudan, Afghanistan, and practically every country between saw the bombings as an assault on national sovereignty and on the Muslim peoples. Hundreds of people in Khartoum gathered in front of the still smoldering factory and others stormed the closed U.S. embassy the night of the bombings. More than 10,000 rallied over the following days to show their anger. "As a Sudanese I'm mad," Abdulrahman Abuzayd, an Islamic scholar who does not support the government in Khartoum, was quoted as saying in the *New York Times*. He contrasted Washington's attitude toward Sudan with its support for the Israeli rulers, who "kick out Arab settlers, uproot their homes, and nothing happens."

There were also widespread protests in Pakistan denouncing the bombings and the acquiescence or collusion of the Pakistani government with them. Feeling this pressure, the generally pro-U.S. government in Islamabad issued a statement accusing Washington of violating its airspace by flying the cruise missiles over Pakistan to Afghanistan without permission.

Demonstrators protested in the Israeli-occupied territories of Gaza and West Bank, where clashes between Palestinians and Israeli troops have already been heating up.

The governments of Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Malaysia, Yemen, and Libya were among those that issued statements denouncing the bombings. The Arab League also protested what it called "a blatant violation of the sovereignty" of Sudan. The governments in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which have close ties with Washington, kept silent, nervous at the probable reaction to a statement supporting the U.S. action.

Cuba: 'Open acts of aggression'

The Cuban foreign ministry also issued a statement August 23. "Cuba condemned the unjustified terrorist attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam that took the lives of hundreds of people," it read. "We, likewise, strongly condemn the military attacks perpetrated against targets in Sudan and Afghanistan on August 20, which constitute open acts of aggression that have caused numerous deaths among the civilian population in those countries. Such an action constitutes use of force lacking any legal justification and based solely on the abusive and arbitrary use of the United States' huge military and technological might.

"The Republic of Cuba has been — and still is — a victim of terrorist actions organized from abroad by people who were always closely linked to the United States.... That would not have given Cuba the right to take revenge or retaliatory measures against innocent people."

Boris Yeltsin said he was "outraged" at the bombings, though his aides later declared that the Russian president's objection was not being informed beforehand of the U.S. bombing plans. The reaction of the governments of France and Italy was cool. "France takes note of the decision of American authorities to carry out yesterday's bombings by invoking the right to legitimate defense," said the foreign ministry in Paris.

In line with its support for the U.S. bombing raids on Libya in 1986, the British government was the first to congratulate Clinton on the assault on Sudan and Afghanistan. "I strongly support this American action against international terrorists," declared Prime Minister Anthony Blair. Conservative party spokesperson Michael Howard backed Blair's stance. The next day, August 22, the British embassy in Khartoum was stoned by protesters angry at the British government's imperial arrogance toward the Sudanese people. London was the colonial power in Sudan until the 1950s.

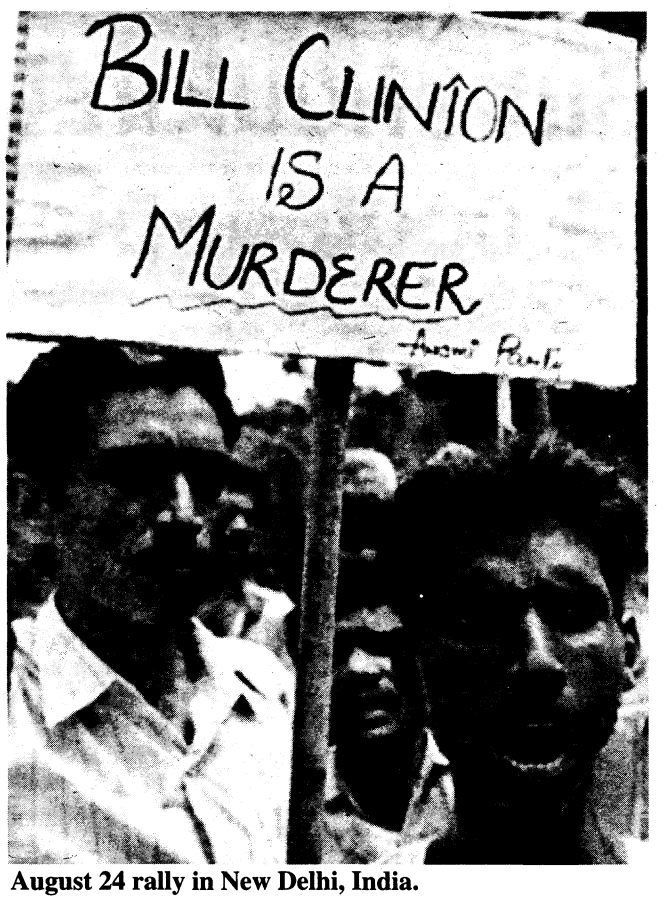
In Washington, Democratic and Republican officials alike lined up behind Clinton. "I think the president did exactly the right thing," said House Speaker Newton Gingrich. House minority leader Richard Gephardt, a likely Democratic contender in the next presidential election, declared that Washington "should respond forcefully when U.S. lives are at stake."

Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan, whose consistent position has been to fight for "America for Americans" at home before going to war abroad, backed the assault in an August 26 syndicated column. He also attacked the White House for not doing enough to use U.S. military might. "America did not lose a major battle in Vietnam but lost the war because we failed to destroy the enemy's capacity, or will, to fight. How, exactly, do we propose to destroy the capacity or will to fight of terrorists now signing up to kill U.S. soldiers, tourists and diplomats in retaliation for last week?"

Sen. Arlen Specter was one of those who put forward what the media has dubbed the "Wag the Dog" theory, recalling a movie by that title in which the U.S. president invents a war to cut across a sex scandal. "There's an obvious issue that will be raised internationally as to whether there is any diversionary motivation," Specter stated.

In an August 26 article, conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer dismissed such arguments. "Bombing bin Laden was no 'Wag the Dog,' " he wrote. "Nonetheless, there *was* an extrinsic force driving the Afghan and Sudanese bombings. It was not the [Monica] Lewinsky affair, but the collapse of Iraq policy."

Marcella Fitzgerald in London contributed to this article.



August 24 rally in New Delhi, India.

Ban on Million Youth March in Harlem is ruled unconstitutional

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — A Federal district court judge in Manhattan ruled August 26 against Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's decision to deny a permit for the September 5 Million Youth March in Harlem. Judge Lewis Kaplan said the arbitrary nature of the permit denial was "breathtaking" in its "lack of standards" and unconstitutional. He also rejected the alternate sites the city administration proposed — Randall's Island or the Bronx — because the locations were remote and would "adversely affect" the character and impact of the march. City officials have vowed to appeal the court decision.

The march is scheduled from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and will take place between 118th St. and 147th St. on Malcolm X Boulevard in Harlem.

THE MILITANT

Hundreds protest U.S. bombings

Since August 20, the *Militant* has received numerous reports about actions in many U.S. cities and other countries protesting Washington's bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan, and about discussion and debate on the job in response to this imperialist assault. We reprint below excerpts from several of these articles.

BY TOM ALTER

DES MOINES, Iowa — The Iowa Socialist Workers Campaign organized a picket line in front of the federal building here August 21 to protest the U.S. bombing the previous day. The Young Socialists and the Iowa Black United Front endorsed the action as well. Thirteen people attended, including a member of the Communication Workers of America (CWA) on strike against US West. The action was covered by TV Channel 5 (the local ABC affiliate) live on their 5 p.m. news. Footage included an interview with this reporter, who is running on the Socialist Workers ticket for governor of Iowa. Another journalist from Associated Press interviewed a number of the participants, including the CWA striker.

Later that night, 13 people attended the Militant Labor Forum held at the Pathfinder Bookstore here, the theme of which was changed from "Government out of the Teamsters" to "Speak out against the U.S. bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan."

The civil war in Sudan has been at the center of the discussions among many working people in this area. There are about 1,200 immigrants from southern Sudan here, who have fled government assaults on the predominantly Black African southern part of the country (in the northern part the population is mostly Arab). After my shift ended on August 21, I had a chance to briefly talk to six Sudanese co-workers at the IBP meatpacking plant where I work. All six were from the south. One of them was completely opposed to what Washington did, three were still thinking about it, and the other two supported the bombing initially on the grounds that it hurt the Sudanese government they hold responsible for the civil war.

Most of my fellow workers were interested to hear my explanation as to why Washington is the number one terrorist in the world. Many have since bought copies of last week's *Militant* with the headline "Protest U.S. bombings of Sudan, Afghanistan!" Socialists in the plant are now organizing discussions with a number of Sudanese workers to find out more about the civil war in that country and help write about it in future issues of the *Militant.*

Tom Alter is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers.

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BY SAMUEL FARLEY

LOS ANGELES — "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! U.S. bombings have got to go!" chanted about 14 people picketing the federal building here August 21. "Who's the number one terrorist? The U.S. government." More than half of the participants were high school students and other youth. For most, this was their first political action in the streets.

The picket line was initiated by members of the Young Socialists, Socialist Workers Party, and supporters who were attending a class on *Wage, Labor and Capital/Value, Price and Profit* by Karl Marx the night before at the Pathfinder bookstore here, hours after the bombing began. We had just received copies of the *Militant* news article and editorial from the bombing, which everyone read and discussed that night. At the end of the August 21 rally, participants decided to call another protest August 24. About 40 attended that action.

Samuel Farley is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

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BY KEVIN DWIRE

CLEVELAND — Chanting "Stop the bombing of Sudan! U.S. hands off Afghanistan!" 20 protesters picketed the Old Federal Courthouse here August 24. The demonstration was covered by one radio and three television stations. The protest was called by several groups in Cleveland that had staged weekly pickets during the U.S. government threats to assault Iraq earlier this year. Sponsors included the Revolutionary Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Workers World Party. Activists building the Million Youth March, which is taking place in New York, also attended.

Kevin Dwire is a member of the United Steelworkers of America.

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BY BILL SCHEER

MINNEAPOLIS — Chanting "Hands Off Sudan. Hands Off Afghanistan," over 100 people picketed the Federal Building here August 21.

"I'm here to oppose the hypocrisy of the U.S. government, which says it's opposed to terrorism and then carries out acts of war against two countries," young activist Dan Moore said in an interview.

Kathryn Haddad, a representative of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, said at a brief rally at the end of the picket: "We are tired of people being labeled as 'terrorists' because they won't submit to U.S. policy." Other speakers included representatives from the East Timor Action Network, Progressive Student Organization, Women Against Military Madness, Vets for Peace, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and SWP candidate for governor of Minnesota Tom Fiske.

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Similar actions took place in numerous other U.S. cities. About 20 people demonstrated outside the New York City federal building August 20 and over 200 rallied the next day outside the U.S. army recruiting station at Manhattan's Times Square. The Washington Peace Center called a demonstration near the White House August 20, and nearly 80 people took part. The New Jersey Socialist Workers Campaign called a picket August 20 that drew 15 people. SWP candidate for the 13th congressional district Susan Anmuth was interviewed by Channel 12 news. Eight people demonstrated outside the federal building in downtown Birmingham, Alabama, August 21; all the major local TV stations covered this event. Eleven young people, most of them high school students, attended a protest meeting in Naples, Florida, August 23 organized by the Socialist Workers candidates and about half said they would go to Miami the following week to join similar actions there. And 35 people took part in a protest outside the federal building in Seattle during afternoon rush hour August 21.

In addition, protest actions took place in a number of other countries. Twenty-five people took part in a picket at the U.S. consulate in Vancouver, British Columbia, August 24. Forty picketed the U.S. consulate in Auckland, New Zealand, the same day, and 35 turned out for a protest in Christchurch, New Zealand, August 25.

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BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — "Hands off Sudan! Hands off Afghanistan!", "No U.S. bombs, no British complicity!" and "U.S.-UK: terrorist states!" were slogans chanted by 130 pickets outside the U.S. embassy here August 22. The picket had been initiated by the Institute for Independence Studies and included Afghan, Tunisian, and Iraqi nationals resident in London. A number of individuals simply turned up hoping that a protest would be taking place.

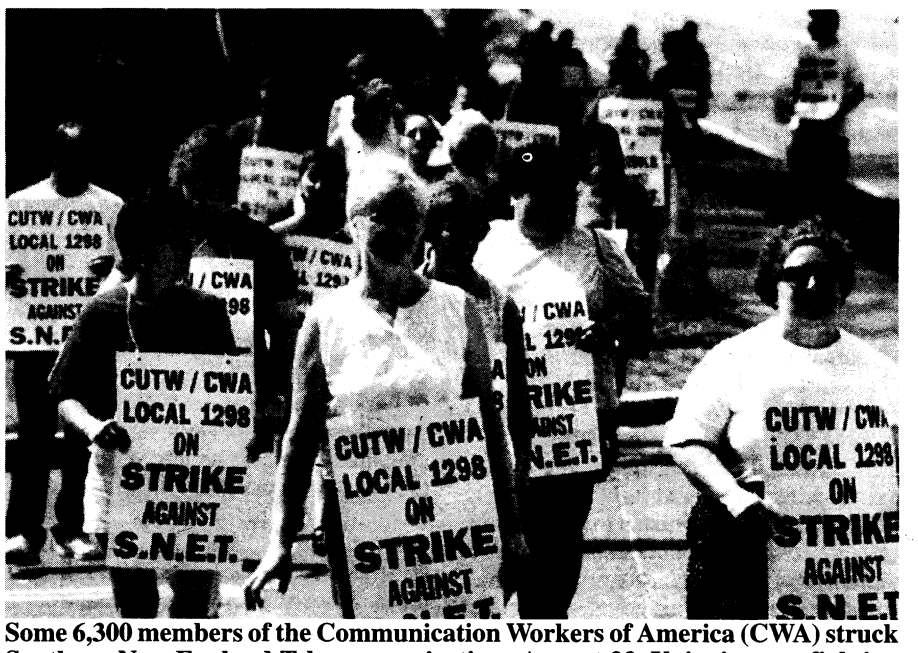
Steve Goulding, a young government employee, said, "The U.S. bombing has nothing to do with a fight against international terrorism. It's all about U.S. foreign policy. As usual the British government expressed its full support."

Another protester was Lamis Abdullah, an Iraqi woman who lives in London. "I can't separate this attack from the aggression against Iraq," she said. "The same people are behind it and it has the same motive: to disarm the Arab people in the Middle East and leave Israel as a superpower in the region."

Sammy Qayum was one of about a dozen Afghanis present at the picket. Qayum, when living in Afghanistan, participated in the war against the Soviet invasion and was trained at the very camps bombed last week by Washington. "The camps were built and backed by the CIA," he said, "that's why America knew where they were."

Pete Middleton, a member of Wolfe Tone Society, said that opposing the U.S. action was important for fighters for Irish freedom like himself.

Northeast phone workers walk out



Some 6,300 members of the Communication Workers of America (CWA) struck Southern New England Telecommunications August 23. Unionists are fighting for pay increases and ending two-tier wages. They join 35,000 CWA workers who struck US West in the Midwest August 15. About 300 people picketed the Minneapolis US West location August 17. The CWA there is demanding an end to forced overtime and a pay-per-performance plan.

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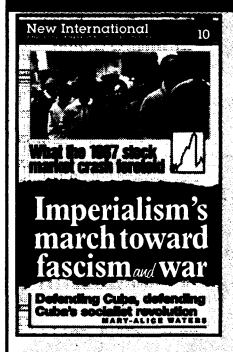

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Clinton: a war president

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New York Times and other big-business dailies are now beginning to detail what they expect from Clinton. They expect him never again to make the error of beginning something he is politically unable to finish, as the Bush administration did in Iraq. "U.S. military leaders are understandably reluctant to see our forces used anywhere unless they can be sure of a smashing victory," writes Anthony Lewis, the most liberal among the parade of *Times* columnists who have been crusading for U.S. air strikes against Serbian forces in Bosnia. "But the world today requires the use of force in subtler ways, and we have a civilian Commander in Chief to say so." In subtler ways!

If you are going to use military power, then bring home the bacon — that was the U.S. rulers' message in the elections. That is what defeated Bush. That is why John F. Kennedy won in 1960 (with his fake "missile gap") and why Lyndon Johnson won in 1964. Barry Goldwater was not the war candidate in the '64 election, as history proved, and John F. Kennedy's administration was certainly the most dangerous one installed in post–World War II history. The Kennedy administration carried out the unsuccessful invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and was faced down by the revolutionary Cuban government and people when it sought to do so once again during the so-called missile crisis of October 1962. And Kennedy initiated the rapid escalation of U.S. military intervention in Vietnam that became a full-scale war during the subsequent Johnson and Nixon administrations. So, every time commentators compare the new Clinton administration to Kennedy's, we should be uneasy.

Clinton, in fact, was the point man in this election for ratcheting up hostile U.S. government moves against the Cuban revolution. Had it not been for election-year pressures, for example, there is no reason to think Bush would have signed the so-called Cuban Democracy Act tightening the economic embargo against Cuba. In fact, Bush was tactically opposed to substantial aspects of the bill, as was a substantial section of the business class in this country. But then Clinton went down to Florida and gave a speech promising full support to the bill, which was sponsored by Democratic U.S. representative Robert Torricelli from New Jersey. So Bush finally signed it, not wanting to lose support from right-wing Cuban émigrés. But it was Clinton who led the charge and got the credit from the ruling class.